

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims

1.-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) A method for repairing a cardiac valve having leaflets, said method comprising:

(a) providing an apparatus configured for delivery to the cardiac valve, the apparatus comprising a releasable fastener;

(b) using said releasable fastener, grasping the leaflets of the valve together at a selected apposition point;

(c) measuring at least one of blood flow and pressure gradient across said valve;

(d) determining whether to permanently secure said valve leaflets at said selected apposition point based upon at least one of said measured blood flow and pressure gradient; and

(e) releasing said fastener from said apparatus to permanently secure said leaflets together at a selected apposition site.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising, prior to said step (b), measuring one of at least blood flow and pressure gradient across said valve to obtain a baseline measurement(s).

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein step (d) comprises comparing said measurement(s) of said step (c) with said baseline measurement(s).

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising, prior to permanently securing said leaflets, releasing said leaflets and repeating said steps (b) through (d).

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein said steps (a) through (e) are repeated until the measurement(s) of step (c) indicates that the functioning of said valve leaflets is sufficiently improved.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said method is performed by means of an endovascular approach.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said method is performed by means of a surgical approach.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16 further comprising accessing said cardiac valve through an entry site formed within an apex of the heart.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 9 wherein said method is performed while the heart is beating.

19.-29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, further comprising, after said step (e), anchoring the fastener to an appropriate location on the cardiac anatomy

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein the cardiac anatomy is the ventricle wall.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said step (c) comprises delivering at least one of a pressure monitoring probe and a flow monitoring probe proximate to said cardiac valve.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein said at least one of a pressure monitoring probe and a flow monitoring probe is delivered by means of said apparatus.

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said steps (b), (c), (d) and (e) are performed with the assistance of transesophageal echocardiogram.

35. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

a means for temporarily securing said fastener to said leaflets; and

a means for permanently securing said fastener to said leaflets.

36. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said apparatus further comprises a delivery sheath for delivering said fastener from outside a patient's body to said valve leaflets.

37. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 36, wherein said sheath is selected from the group consisting of a catheter and a cannula.

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein said cardiac valve is the mitral valve.